



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMISSION ON HEALTH
Virtual Meeting via Zoom
January 19, 2023
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Jonathan Arias, Alana Aronin, Brent Berger, Elliott Brown, Donna Cawley, Yingxi Chen, Desiree de la Torre, Crystal DeVance-Wilson, Susan Emery, Laurel Fain, Gabriela Lemus, Adam Lustig, Cesar Perez, Betty Smith, Stephanie Iszard (on behalf of Dr. Kapunan), Dr. Davis, Dr. Bridgers

Members Absent: Marcela Campoli, Kendra Harris

County Council Staff: Tara Clemons Johnson

DHHS Staff: Meghan Sontag

Guests: Kimberly Townsend, Melvin Cauthen, Councilmember Albornoz, Beth Shuman, Venchele Saint Dic

AGENDA ITEMS/PRESENTER	ACTION ITEMS /RESPONSIBLE PARTY
<p>Meeting call to Order– <i>Crystal DeVance-Wilson – Chair</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting was called to order at 6:03pm. The COH Chair welcomed Commissioners and guests • The next two COH meetings are February 16th and March 16th 	
<p>Approval of December Minutes– <i>Crystal DeVance-Wilson, Chair</i></p> <p><u>A MOTION</u> was made by Crystal DeVance-Wilson to approve the December 15, 2022 minutes. The motion was seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved</p>	<p>Post the approved December minutes to COH website- <i>COH Staff (complete)</i></p>
<p>Approval of Perpetual Calendar– <i>Crystal DeVance-Wilson, Chair</i></p> <p>Chair commented information was added to the Perpetual Calendar to help with planning and aligning with the budget cycle. This calendar is a tool for COH to use to keep track of what needs to be completed, and by when. If Commissioners would like to adjust the calendar in the future, a vote is required.</p> <p><u>A MOTION</u> was made by Laurel Fain to approve the COH Perpetual Calendar. The motion was seconded by Adam Lustig. The calendar was unanimously approved</p>	<p>Add the approved COH Perpetual Calendar to COH handbook and upload to Teams- <i>COH Staff (complete)</i></p>
<p>Approval of Access to Care Letter– <i>Crystal DeVance-Wilson, Chair</i></p> <p><u>A MOTION</u> was made by Gabriela Lemus to approve the Access to Care letter. The motion was seconded by Donna Cawley. The Access to Care Letter was unanimously approved</p>	<p>Send Access to Care Letter to County Executive- <i>COH staff</i></p>

<p>Chair thanked Commissioners for their work in getting the three advocacy letters to the County Executive by the end of last year.</p> <p>Chair reminded Commissioners of other opportunities to advocate for priorities. The next step is to send advocacy letters to County Council by March.</p>	
<p>MCDHHS Health Officer’s Report – Dr. Davis, Montgomery County Health Officer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Davis provided a brief COVID update- County is in MEDIUM level, seeing some decreases in community transmission rates. However, still seeing significant COVID in the hospitals. Important to push vaccination message to the community, encourage community to get the bivalent booster if have not yet received it. • Dr. Davis shared RSV and flu is trending down. • MCPS Press Conference occurred earlier today highlighting dangers of fentanyl and opioids. This is in our community and need to be talking about it with our children. It is in every zip code in the County. Dr. Davis is interested in starting listening sessions to understand disparities in the community and what we should be doing. • Dr. Davis congratulated Dr. Bridgers in advance of assuming the role of Chief of Public Health. • Dr. Bridgers shared there were a lot of questions that occurred at his initial interview with Council for the Chief of Public Health role regarding LGBTQ+ community and challenges with access to care. Getting out in the community and being active listeners will provide us with additional insight. • Chair expressed interest in learning more about the challenges identified in relation to LGBTQ+ Community and fentanyl in the County. Stephanie Iszard is interested in presenting to the COH regarding fentanyl in the schools, there have been 5 deaths from fentanyl this year. • Commissioner asked about distribution of fentanyl test strips- these are available from the Health Dept but not at MCPS 	<p>Add Stephanie Iszard to February COH meeting agenda – COH staff (complete)</p>
<p>Conversation with Councilmember Gabe Albornoz – Gabe Albornoz, Councilmember and Chair HHS Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Albornoz thanked the Commission for their work and expressed his excitement for having Dr. Davis on board as Health Officer. Also expressed excitement for the new Secretary of Health Rafael Lopez who has connections to the County. Mr. Albornoz emphasized the importance of the County having strong partnerships and alliances with the State, municipal leaders, and Federal partners. • New HHS Committee: Gabe Albornoz, Dawn Luedtke and Laurie-Anne Sayles. Councilmember Sayles will be the lead for a new Council subgroup focusing on addressing disparities in public health. • Working on setting the agenda for the upcoming year, a few key areas of focus for Council include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fentanyl: Will be having a joint Committee session – Education and Culture and HHS Committee session ASAP, all deeply alarmed with fentanyl use ○ Looking to build off Black Physician Network’s efforts. They are collecting impressive data and have been very successful tapping into networks that are excited to participate. They are focusing on dental health. ○ Mental Health: Working with mental health providers on a variety of key issues- mental health continues to be one of the most consistent constituent concerns ○ Technology and innovation 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Aging community- fastest growing demographic in our county • Question regarding data needs and progress in this area: New Food Resilience Office at the Executive Level will be collecting and providing data in the food security space. Additionally, need to be able to provide community-based organizations/non-profit organizations with administration support, funding cannot all be tied to providing direct service. Need support for data collection. • Chair shared we are continuing our advocacy for data specialist for PHS, being able to get timely reliable data is important for the COH to plan and prioritize needs of residents. Mr. Alborno shared his confidence if this data analyst position recommendation comes from the CE, Council will support it. If it does not due to competing issues, Council is also looking to support it. • Commissioner asked how we can support additional infrastructure support for nonprofits- Mr. Alborno shared if the COH would include this in their recommendations it would be well received. • Commissioner asked about healthcare workforce- Gov Moore announced new initiative, high school students are encouraged to do a year of service after graduation and before college. Mr. Alborno suggested COH send a letter to Gov Moore encouraging them to prioritize healthcare spaces to plant seeds for college. Additionally, COH can consider hosting a Summer RISE student. Other efforts being explored include greater investment and underwriting costs for those studying in health/healthcare field at Montgomery College and University of Shady Grove. 	
<p>Overview of Communicable Disease & Epidemiology/Emergency Preparedness & Response – Kimberly Townsend, MPA, BSN, RN, Senior Administrator, Melvin Cauthen, Administrator</p> <p>Kimberly Townsend provided an overview of programs offered at Dennis Avenue Health Center in Silver Spring, as well as other locations and out in the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicable Disease & Epidemiology/ Emergency Preparedness and Response Team includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Disease Control Program, Immunization Program and Vital Records ○ HIV/STD Program ○ Public Health Emergency Preparedness & Response ○ Tuberculosis Control Program • TB cases have been decreasing over time, and they do not see many MDR cases in the County (2-3cases over the past few years) • Outreach regarding Monkeypox vaccine was very successful- provided more monkeypox vaccinations than any other County in Maryland, over 2,100. Currently, demand for the vaccine is low • Due to data breach at the state- delay in getting current data regarding STI rates in the County • Currently ramping up PrEP efforts-two different pathways regarding asymptomatic vs symptomatic patients- asymptomatic individuals get labs first, symptomatic patients see a nurse practitioner first • Commissioner asked why we are seeing late HIV diagnosis- have seen folks coming from other countries or those who are here and undocumented may delay going to the doctors and go to the hospital before first diagnosed. Commissioner also asked about opt out testing- Melvin said that is a wish list item. Educating providers and making HIV testing part of standard labs to reduce the stigma and catch cases that would go undiagnosed. • Melvin shared the priority is to increase testing and getting those who test negative started on PrEP 	<p>Provide Commissioners with slide decks presented- <i>COH Staff (complete)</i></p>
<p>Workgroup Huddle and Updates- Crystal DeVance-Wilson, Chair</p>	

<p>Chair noted we ran over time. Asked Susan to share her request.</p> <p>Susan shared her interest in presenting the Environmental Health & Education workgroup advocacy letter to two other groups: the Climate, Energy and Air Quality Advisory Committee and Water Quality Advisory Group meetings. The goal is to tell them about COH efforts and ask for support in this advocacy. Commissioners discussed this as an opportunity to build bridges between Commissions and possibility of collaboration and synergistic relationships.</p> <p><u>A MOTION</u> was made by Cimo Chen to approve Sue’s presentation of the Environmental Health & Education workgroup advocacy letter to the Climate, Energy and Air Quality Advisory Committee and Water Quality Advisory Group meetings. The motion was seconded by Adam Lustig. The presentations were unanimously approved</p>	<p>Susan Emery to present the Environmental Health & Education advocacy letter to the Climate, Energy and Air Quality Advisory Committee and Water Quality Advisory Group- <i>COH staff provided letter via email to CEAQA and WQAG staff 1.25.23</i></p>
<p>COH Liaison Updates- <i>Crystal DeVance-Wilson, Chair</i></p> <p>Chair asked if Commissioners had any liaison updates to share. Susan shared the Commission on Disabilities is focused on developmental disabilities at this time.</p> <p>Chair reminded the Commissioners of the 3 required trainings; Open Meetings Act Training, Parliamentary Training, Ethics Training. To be completed as soon as possible.</p> <p>Chair shared we have completed our advocacy letters for FY24 budget. Commissioners now can add emphasis to advocacy letters that have already been sent to the CE prior to sending on to Council. Opportunity now to add/edit and revise the letters before March. Also, opportunity to request meetings with CE and Council to discuss advocacy submitted. Chair requests workgroup leads join in meetings if this is something they want to proceed with.</p> <p>Chair also asked as we move forward, and create new priorities, to please be mindful with aligning priorities with Executive and DHHS priorities so we can show we are working towards the same goals. Chair emphasized the importance of including data and references in advocacy letters to provide a background to the situation, the severity of the problem, and offer alternative recommendations based in evidence. Chair thanked Commissioners for their time and effort in this work.</p> <p>Susan shared the request she made to Dr. Rogers- a presentation regarding the vision of DHHS for the next 3-5yrs to help COH create prioritize that align. This is a standing agenda item on the perpetual calendar in January moving forward. Dr. Rogers is a presenter for next month.</p> <p>Chair made note after next month, there are no scheduled guest speakers. This is an opportunity to invite new speakers to provide data needed to create new FY priorities. Commissioners are interested in hearing what DHHS is advocating for on a state level.</p>	<p>Complete the 3 trainings and upload certificates – <i>All Commissioners</i></p> <p>Invite Leslie Frey to upcoming COH meeting to discuss what DHHS is advocating for at the state level -<i>COH staff (complete)</i></p> <p>Montgomery County’s Priorities for the 2023 General Assembly</p> <p>Montgomery County Hospital Collaborative Community Health Needs Assessment 2022</p>
<p>Adjournment</p> <p><u>A MOTION</u> was made by Betty Smith to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Cimo Chen. Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:00pm.</p>	